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PREFACE.

Having had occasion to study transportation in several of those practical aspects that are demanding attention at the present day, I came to believe that if one was ever to understand this subject he must begin farther back than writers upon it were accustomed to do. I therefore conceived the plan of writing a Theory of Transportation that should unfold the most important of its relations to economic and political life. I also, about the same time, began to be familiar with the writings of the newer school of sociologists, and thought that I found in their analysis of society, particularly in that of Schäffle,¹ a basis upon which to work out my plan.

The present essay, then, is an attempt to put these two things together, to write a theory of transportation from a sociological standpoint.

While many of the matters here treated have been and are the subject of unceasing discussion, others have received but small attention. This is particularly true of the theory of the location of cities, to which I have devoted a chapter. Indeed I think that the analysis of the territorial relations of society offered in chapters ix to xiii brings to view an important field of social research that has been much neglected. Since the work of Kohl, published

¹ "Bau und Leben des socialen Körpers," vol. i.

in 1841, I know of no comprehensive and connected investigation of that branch of demography, or demographic sociology, that treats of the forces and laws that determine the territorial distribution of persons and wealth.¹ Little is understood concerning the theory of settlement, the theory of the location of towns and cities, or the laws that determine their size, the density of their population and their internal structure.

Certainly these inquiries have been neglected in the United States. Yet we have here the amplest possible material for working out this branch of science; ampler than has ever existed elsewhere. Within the memory of living men, for the most part, our country has been settled and our towns and cities have grown up,—not without the action of laws, which remain as yet unformulated.

As to the practical bearing of such investigations, I hope to have shown that an intelligent solution of the railway question, at least, must rest upon a study of territorial demography. And I think that this study is equally important to the student of economic and social life in many other aspects.

Of course I do not mean to imply that much has not already been done in the line of this essay. There are at least four important works largely devoted to the general theory of transportation, as distinguished from such particular branches of it as the theory of railway rates. These are the following: Kohl, “*Die Verkehr und die Ansiedelungen der Menschen in ihrer*

¹A good deal is now being done in this field by men who approach it from the side of geography. The most important work seems to be that of Professor Ratzel, “*Anthropogeographie*” (Part 1, 1882, Part 2, 1891). The same author has more recently published “*Die politische Geographie der Vereinigten Staaten*” (1893).

Abhängigkeit von der Gestaltung der Erdoberfläche;"¹ Roscher, "Nationalökonomik des Handels;" Sax, "Die Verkehrsmittel in Volks- und Staatswirthschaft;" Foville, "La Transformation des Moyens de Transport et ses Conséquences Économiques et Sociales."

I need not say that economic literature, and particularly that of America, is rich in studies of railroad and water transportation and of the problem of their public regulation. Whatever merit this paper may have consists in an attempt to look at the matter from a slightly different point of view.

¹This important work did not come into my hands until after the present paper was written.